

Message Text

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44

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 PC-10 OMB-01 CIEP-03 CIAE-00

COME-00 EB-11 INR-11 LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 L-03 NSC-07 PA-04 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 EUR-25 NIC-01 /174 W

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R 091100Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6751

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PORT OF SPAIN 1899

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, TD

SUBJ: TELEPHONE STRIKE APPARENTLY RESOLVED

REF: POS 1849

1. SEVERE STRIKE AT TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO TELEPHONE COMPANY (TELCO) APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN RESOLVED AFTER SEVERAL STORMY UNION MEETINGS AND EMPLOYEES RETURNED TO WORK AUGUST 7. TELCO'S OFFER TO HIRE DISPUTED EXECUTIVE AS CONSULTANT INSTEAD OF MEMBER OF MANAGEMENT STAFF WAS EVENTUALLY ACCEPTED BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNICATION WORKERS' UNION (CWU). AGREEMENT STIPULATED, HOWEVER, THAT TELCO ACTIVELY SEEK TO FILL THE VACANT MANAGEMENT POSITIONS IN QUESTION (ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER FOR ADMINISTRATION AND COMPANY SECRETARY) BY PROMOTION FROM WITHIN THE COMPANY STAFF. UNION LEADER SENATOR CARL TULL SAID THAT THE AGREEMENT WITH TELCO "ESTABLISHED A FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE" WHICH WILL PROVIDE PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE COMPANY.

2. SETTLEMENT OF THE STRIKE WAS DELAYED BY APPARENT SEVERE DISSENSON WITHIN THE CWU. TULL HAS SIGNED AN
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AGREEMENT WITH TELCO EVENING OF AUGUST 1, BUT THIS

AGREEMENT WAS REJECTED BY UNION MEMBERSHIP AT MEETING
AUGUST 2. TULL THEN WALKED OUT THE MEETING AND
LOCKED HIMSELF IN AN UPSTAIRS OFFICE. NEXT--ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS

--HE WAS PHYSICALLY DRAGGED BACK TO THE MEETING, AND FORCIBLY
CRITICIZED BY DISSIDENT UNION MEMBERS. AFTER A LONG
HOLIDAY WEEKEND, CWU OFFICERS MET AUGUST 6 AND ORDERED
THEIR MEMBERS BACK TO WORK, APPARENTLY WITHOUT MAKING
ANY CHANGE IN THE TERMS OF THE AUGUST 1 AGREEMENT WITH
TELCO. COMMENT: IF--AS MANY PEOPLE SUSPECT--SENATOR
TULL STAGE-MANAGED THE UNION'S REJECTION OF HIS AGREE-
MENT, IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THE SITUATION GOT OUT OF HAND
WHEN IT RESULTED IN CALLS FOR TULL'S OUSTER. TULL HIMSELF
HAS MINIMIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DISSIDENTS WITHIN HIS
UNION AND SUGGESTED THAT THEY ARE MOTIVATED ONLY BY BLIND
OPPOSITION TO THE TELCO APPOINTEE, WHO WORKED FOR THE MINISTRY OF
LABOR MANY YEARS AGO.

3. TELEPHONE SERVICE HAS ALREADY BEEN PARTIALLY RESTORED,
AND OPERATOR ASSISTANCE, INTERNATIONAL SERVICE AND TELEX
ARE ONCE AGAIN AVAILABLE. RESTORATION OF FULL DOMESTIC
SERVICE MAY TAKE SOME TIME, HOWEVER, DEPENDING UPON THE
DEGREE OF DAMAGE DONE BY LACK OF ATTENTION AND MAINTENANCE
DURING THE THREE-WEEK WORK STOPPAGE.

4. WITH REGARD TO THE OTHER LABOR ACTION REPORTED
REFTEL, POSTMEN HAVE DISASSOCIATED THEMSELVES FROM THE
"GO-SLOW" ACTION UNDERTAKEN BY SOME EMPLOYEES WHO WORK
INSIDE POST OFFICES, BUT THE GRIEVANCES INVOLVED HAVE
YET TO BE RESOLVED. MAJOR POST OFFICES WERE COMPLETELY
CLOSED BY A "SICK OUT" AUGUST 6 AND 7, BUT RE-OPENED
AUGUST 8. MAIL SERVICE IS EXPECTED TO REMAIN UNCERTAIN
UNTIL MINISTRY OFFICIALS AND POSTAL EMPLOYEES REACH
AGREEMENT UPON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS
MADE BY THE GOTT STUDY GROUP.
MILLER

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Message Attributes

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